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A

SERMON,

PREACHED IN THE

CATHEDRAL CHURCH of *NORWICH*,

BEFORE THE

GOVERNORS

OF THE

NORFOLK and NORWICH

HOSPITAL,

At their first ANNIVERSARY MEETING, on FRIDAY *Auguſt* the 21ſt, 1772.

By the RIGHT REVEREND

PHILIP LORD BISHOP of NORWICH.

Publiſhed at the requeſt of the GOVERNORS.

To which is added,

An Account of the PRESENT STATE of the ſaid HOSPITAL.

NORWICH:

Printed by WILLIAM CHASE.

MDCCLXXII.

BRITISH MUSEUM

PROVERBS XXII. 2.

The Rich and Poor meet together: the Lord is the Maker of them All.

YOU remember the Apologue of St. *Paul* in his firſt Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*; where he compares the Church, the body of Chriſt, to the human body, which is compoſed of a variety of parts, very different from each other, in their formation, and in their functions, but all of them neceſſary to the good of the whole. It is applicable to Civil as well as Religious Society. One of the ſame kind had been anciently ſo applied with good effect, to appeaſe an unreaſonable and ſeditious populace in Rome, who had been deluded, by ſubtle artifices and plauſible harangues, to withdraw their confidence from their beſt Friends and Benefactors. But there was more force in it as urged by St. *Paul*, than in the mouth of the Roman Orator; becauſe He could with truth introduce the conſideration of the Divine Will, and give a Similitude all the ſtrength of a Command, "*God ſet the members every one of them* "*in the body as it hath pleaſed Him.*" "*The eye cannot* "*ſay to the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the* "*hand to the feet, I have no need of you.*" "*God hath* "*tempered the body together, having given more abund-*"*ant honour to that which lacked; that there ſhould be* "*no Schiſm in the body; but that the members ſhould* "*have the ſame care one for another.*"

I. Corinth. C. XII. v. 18, &c.

In the ſame manner hath God allotted to each man who cometh into the world his proper office and buſineſs in it: in many caſes moſt probably by his immediate providence, that is, where great events appear incapable of being accounted for but by that ſuppoſition; although more generally by the operation of things, originally diſpoſed by Him to have certain orderly dependances and conſequences. It cannot be denied, but that God can, if he pleaſeth, give to One man, inſtantaneouſly, wherewithall to be clothed with purple and fine linen, and to fare ſumptuouſly every day. This may be done for wiſe reaſons, but beyond our penetration; and for ſimilar reaſons Another may be reduced to poverty, even to be laid at the rich man's gate, full of ſores; to deſire to be fed with the crumbs which fall from his table; and to find but little relief, except from the unmeant charity of the dogs licking his ſores. Thus the rich and poor may meet together, and God be the maker of them all. But ſo likewiſe do they conſtantly meet togther, and ſo is He likewiſe the maker of them all, by his more general providence. In his wiſdom he made the worlds, and peopled them with a variety of inhabitants of different natures and powers. Of all things upon this Earth he made Man to be the ſovereign; and gave him laws, by which he was to direct himſelf in the uſe and government of them. He gave him Reaſon, by which he might know how to treat them rightly; and he endowed him with Affections, which might either heighten the enjoyment of them, or, if too warmly indulged, deſtroy it totally, and turn the good food of ſoul and body to poiſon. It is upon the conduct and connexions of men, or of their anceſtors, that their ſtations in the world depend.

pend. They are all free, and they cannot but uſe their freedom; ſome well, ſome ill; they have different degrees of ſtrength, health, application, ſucceſs; and theſe too are all of them conſequences of the freedom of themſelves or others; ſo that men could not have been what they are in their Kind, without a capacity of becoming what they are in their Degrees.

CIVIL Society, ordained to correct the wildneſs of Nature, introduces an additional variety amongſt them; and all the circumſtances, which attend upon their exiſtence in this world, by innumerable combinations occaſion as great a diverſity of the characters and lots of men, as there is of their ſhapes and complexions.

YOU cannot imagine in your minds (if experience could be put out of the queſtion) that it is poſſible for men to be upon an exact equality; without the neceſſity of Power, and without the duty of Obedience; without Greatneſs, and without Subjection; without Eaſe, and without Labour; without Riches, and without Poverty. All theſe oppoſites muſt meet together. To ſuppoſe all men Rich is an abſurdity: to ſuppoſe all men Poor is an abſurdity: for riches and poverty are correlative things, and infer one another. They cannot but exiſt together. It is God's own ordinance that it ſhould be ſo: He is the maker of us all.

AND this is a conſideration which ſhould lead us to reflect, that as we are all Brethren, all the work of the ſame hand, all deſigned to one great end here, the carrying on the general buſineſs of this world, we are all alike concerned in the movement of the vaſt machine,

machine, and the leſſer wheels are as neceſſary in their reſpective places as the greater; from whence ariſes a call for mutual love and regard.

Do you wear purple and fine linen? you did not cultivate the grounds, nor ſpin, nor weave, nor colour. Do you adorn yourſelf with precious ſtones and gold? you did not dig for them, and you did not faſhion them. Deſpiſe not thoſe who did this for you; for God is their maker. Did you, on the other hand, dig the earth, ſow, plant, ſpin, weave? And do you repine when you ſee the labour of your hands clothing and adorning others? Do you accuſe them of luxury and vanity? You envy them poſſibly at the ſame time: and you certainly forget that God is Their maker; the maker of us All; of our conditions and ſtations as well as of our perſons; that thoſe ſtations have their wants, and will require ſupplies in various proportions: you forget eſpecially that the ordinary demands of the rich, create employment for the poor; and that Their Vanity, if you will have it ſo, is Your Bread. It is very certain, that in the general conſideration of man, as he came out of the hands of his maker, there is no difference of this kind diſcernible; nor is there any reaſon to think that the diſtinction will ſubſiſt in another ſtate. As, "*God is no reſpecter of*
Acts x. 34. "*perſons, but in every Nation he that feareth Him and*
"*worketh righteouſneſs is accepted with him,*" ſo we believe of every Rank and Order of Men; that if they fear God and work righteouſneſs they will be accepted. The gate of heaven is open to all; and whoſoever ſhall hereafter enter that gate, he will find that the temporary diſtinctions of this world will then have ceaſed; and that All thoſe who ſhall have embraced, during this their

their time of probation, the gracious terms of acceptance with God through Chriſt their Redeemer, will meet together in one common ſtate of everlaſting happineſs. But in the mean time the diſtinctions of the world muſt remain. Ever "ſince man was placed upon the earth" it hath been ſo: and it will be ſo, as long as man continueth upon the Earth.

THESE reflections have ſeemed to me no improper introduction to the buſineſs of this day; and I am willing to ſuppoſe, that a private application of them to that buſineſs hath been already made by all who are preſent. And then, what can be a more obvious inference from this conſideration, of the neceſſary mixture of Rich and Poor, than that as they muſt each of them have their reſpective duties, ſo a capital duty of the former muſt be, to alleviate the diſtreſſes of the latter, their brethren, the work of the hands of the ſame God?

To Define this duty would be but a very unneceſſary affectation of correctneſs; unleſs perhaps it might prove in ſome degree miſchievous; as all attempts to make plain things more plain have a manifeſt tendency to perplex, rather than to inform the Underſtanding. Every man in the world knows what it is to alleviate the diſtreſs of others: he knows too, that there is a moſt tranſcendent pleaſure in doing it: he feels it, in the Deſign, in the Act, and in the Remembrance of it: he knows, that if he were in circumſtances ſimilar to thoſe of the objects of his goodneſs, he ſhould wiſh for, pray for, and be grateful to ſuch a Friend: he knows his duty by Intuition; or if he ſhould happen to have fallen into an uncommon degree of inſenſibility, yet he cannot well

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open his Bible without meeting with the cleareſt inſtructions. No man can read that firſt and beſt of Chriſtian ſermons, our Saviour's own; no man can attend to ſundry occaſional declarations of our Bleſſed Lord concerning love to one another; no man can conſider his pointed parables, without applying them to himſelf. Holy writ will make him know, and will make him rejoice in knowing, that it is his buſineſs to mitigate the calamities of the world. Then, when he is contemplating the various wants of mankind, the wonderful works of his Redeemer will particularly call forth his attention to one amongſt the moſt dreadful of thoſe wants, the want of Health. And it ſeems a very natural thought, and an eaſy inference, that as Chriſt Jeſus in great meaſure proved his divine miſſion by healing the ſick miraculouſly, ſo He by healing them charitably, ſhould prove himſelf Chriſt's true Diſciple, obeying his commands, and following his example.

It is not to enforce the practice of this duty in a general view that we meet here this day: but it is to recommend it upon a particular plan, which you have already adopted, and generouſly ſupported. No man I ſuppoſe ever doubted but, that Chriſtianity required him to heal the ſick if he is able to do it. But many a man may have ſaid, Why not in the pariſhes where they reſide? Why not at their own homes? Why in an Hoſpital? Why in a precarious Hoſpital, depending not upon a ſettled permanent income, but upon annual and voluntary Contributions? Why ſhould we do that in conjunction with others, which every man may do for himſelf? To theſe particulars a few conſiderations muſt be ſubmitted by way of reply.

Now

Now the ſick poor cannot poſſibly be ſo well aſſiſted in their own pariſhes, and in their own cottages (at leaſt many wiſe and good perſons think ſo) as in an Hoſpital. Men of competent ſkill in medicine are doubtleſs ſpread about the Country; but they are not at hand in every Village; they cannot always be procured ſpeedily; their attendance when procured cannot well be ſo conſtant as the caſe may require; Phyſick is their Profeſſion, and as they depend upon it for the bread of themſelves and their families, they muſt be paid; and good as their hearts may be, it will be very hard upon them if they are not paid. But then, this is a conſideration, which deters the poor from making their caſes known in time; and when they are known, there is always in them an unwillingneſs to apply for ſuch relief, and an impatience, if the effect of phyſick is not ſo quick as the effect of what men conceive of Charms; they expect it to do it's buſineſs inſtantaneouſly; or if a few of them are ſedate and ſenſible enough to ſubmit to good directions, yet frequently their little All will be ſpent, before their diſtreſs can reach the ears of thoſe who are beſt able to aſſiſt them with money; which is apt to come too much more readily in the time of calamity, than in the way of reimburſement afterwards. Add to this the inexperience of all about them; their fears and their folly; the danger of undoing all that may have been done for them, in one moment, by what they cannot conceive to be of importance, a little more warmth, or a little more coolneſs, or an apparently trifling change of diet, in quantity or in quality. Nor muſt we forget the conſideration of their danger from the advice of weak perſons, who think themſelves in the poſſeſſion of remedies for All diſeaſes, which perhaps never yet were effectual, or not ſingly ſo, to the cure of One;

any more than the ſtill greater danger, and ſtill greater expence, incurred by applying to ignorant pretenders to that Art, which muſt have it's Foundation in Knowledge, and muſt attain to it's Perfection by Experience.

THIS, if I miſtake not, is the true caſe of the poor, ſettled in little Towns and Villages. But there are likewiſe poor Travellers, to and from your Harveſts, to and from your Sea-ports; nor let the poor Beggar, even the idle and uſeleſs Beggar be unthought of; for "*God "maketh His ſun to riſe on the evil and on the good,* Matth. v. 45. "*and ſendeth rain on the juſt, and on the unjuſt.*" And if theſe ſhould be viſited with ſickneſs, or meet with ſudden accidents, to which they are exceedingly liable, doth not humanity ſhudder at the thought of packing them Off—pardon the expreſſion; it was not choſen for its elegance—of packing them Off to their legal ſettlements, under a management too not always of the moſt tender kind, when a few ſhillings might relieve them in this City? For Here is a Certainty of the attendance, and the ready and conſtant attendance, of men ſkillful in all the branches of medical knowledge: Here neither the poor nor their relations have any expence to fear: Here the friendly gates will be open to as many as the Manſion can contain, and the Shop to many whom it cannot contain: Here the moſt exact care will be taken, that medicines may be good in their ſeveral kinds, rightly compounded, properly adminiſtered, and accompanied with all that attention to air and diet, which the greateſt and richeſt amongſt us can expect in his own caſe: And Here too the Patients will be happily removed from the fond, but weak aſſiduities of their own families, and guarded againſt the dangerous ſallies of their own impatience.

If we are convinced of all this, let us not be apprehenſive that our good work will come to nought, as being founded, not in perpetual Eſtates, but in voluntary and therefore variable Contributions. I will not ſay in precarious Contributions; becauſe I am very much diſpoſed to believe, that they are leſs precarious, in ſome ſenſe, than Eſtabliſhments. They never can be abuſed or neglected. It is next to impoſſible to ſuppoſe it. The diſburſements will always be under the direction of almoſt as many of the contributors as can poſſibly, of all that can eaſily, attend. There doth not exiſt a temptation to a miſapplication, if you could ſuppoſe any temptation likely to ſucceed. In truth miſapplicaton muſt be prevented by a certainty of it's ruining the whole plan. All men are more attentive likewiſe to their own works, than to thoſe of others. They find more pleaſure in them. They ſee them proſper under their hands; and it is in this caſe, as in that of the produce of the earth; there is a more ſatisfactory reliſh in what we ourſelves have planted, watered, reared up and protected. And as to thoſe, whoſe Age, Sex, Employments, Diffidence, even Indolence, may prevent them from attending in perſon, they will yet have the ſatisfaction of knowing with what care, and diligence, and ability, their Alms are managed; and will ſee the effects of them in the annual printed accounts. Happier ſurely may we be on This ſide the grave, in that particular, than they, who, whilſt they dictate their laſt pious teſtaments, cannot but have ſome ſuſpicion of the inactivity of future managers; and perhaps they may have heard of ſomething worſe than inactivity.

Indeed the doubts of ſucceſs when a Charitable Inſtitution depends upon the wills of men, too often fickle

and changeable, ſeem to me to ariſe from a good heart, but a timid one. Reflection Might overcome thoſe doubts; but Experience cannot fail to do it; and upon that beſt of foundations is this Hoſpital building; upon the Experience of the Capital of this kingdom, and of a conſiderable number of Counties, which have been continually encouraging others, year after year, from the time when the ſpirited efforts of * Dr. ALURED CLARKE broke through every obſtacle which ſtood in his way; as Obſtacles always did, and always will ſtand in the way of every new Deſign, however excellent.

WELL, but we can diſpoſe of our own money, in our own way, at our convenience, amongſt our neareſt neighbours, and we ſee no uſe in throwing it into a common Stock. Diſpoſe of it ſo, and may God give it his bleſſing. But yet it is a lawful uſury, to put your charity Out, if peradventure it may be found to yield a pro-

* Dr. ALURED CLARKE, was a principal Agent in eſtabliſhing an Hoſpital at Wincheſter, for the ſick and lame Poor, in the year 1736, which was the firſt of the kind that had been attempted in any part of this Kingdom, except in London and Weſtminſter. He likewiſe preached an excellent Sermon at the Opening of the ſaid Hoſpital, on St. Luke's day, October the 18th, in the ſame year, which was afterwards publiſhed with a Collection of Papers, Rules and Orders relating to the Riſe, Progreſs and Government of that Charity, with the hope, as he intimates in his Preface, that this would be a means of encouraging the well-diſpoſed in other places to make it a general Bleſſing to our Country. When he was made Dean of Exeter, actuated by the ſame beneficent Spirit, he proved alſo the happy Promoter of the like Eſtabliſhment for the County of Devon and the City of Exeter in the year 1741, ſince which time many other Hoſpitals have been erected in different Parts of the Kingdom, and generouſly ſupported upon the ſame Plan of voluntary Contributions.

a prodigious increaſe. And doubtleſs it hath been found, by repeated trials, that a large ſum of money Collected will do an amazing deal more good in this way, than all it's parts could, when ſeperately applied. Even the widow's mite may do more than ſhew the goodneſs of her own heart; it may be of real ſervice to her neighbour.

Penury May find other objections to Inſtitutions of this kind; but God forbid that it Should. Refinement, Caution, Prudence may alſo find ſome; and poſſibly they may be anſwered too by Refinement, Caution and Prudence. But it will be better for us All to obſerve St. Paul's direction, "*He that giveth let him do* Rom. xii. 8. "*it with ſimplicity.*" A text, which needs no comment; but what is to be found written upon the Hearts of the truly Benevolent.

I will detain you no longer than for the time which one Obſervation more, and an Exhortation ariſing out of it will require. Have we turned our thoughts to the ſerious conſideration of the religious knowledge of our poor Brethren, and of their morals? They are certainly in a deplorable ſtate. Many cauſes have concurred to make them ſo, which it is not to the preſent purpoſe to enumerate. The remedy is difficult to find. There is a pitch of Chriſtian virtue, to which men of all ranks muſt ariſe, before Chriſtian knowledge can be again effectually ſpread abroad: and a melancholy truth it is, that againſt that high pitch of virtue every vice and every folly is ſet in array ſo ſtrongly, that the victory is deſperate. True it is, that this Age and Nation is very remarkably charitable; and true it is, that "Charity will cover a multitude of Sins:"

not

not however one branch of Charity; nor will all it's branches cover thoſe ſins which are willful, daring, preſumptuous, habitual. Yet this very work of this day may perhaps prevent many ſins, both of the rich and poor; many, by recalling to every man's mind the State of his own Soul, to which the ſolemnity of pious aſſemblies naturally leads; many more, by the inſtructions which the Patients will receive during their abode in the Hoſpital; by their being accuſtomed to prayer and thanksgiving, to daily conſiderations of the goodneſs of God, as in all things, ſo in raiſing up to them Benefactors, who ſo liberally provide for their relief. The Place, and what is to be done in the place, have a regular tendency to heal the Souls of the afflicted as well as their Bodies. And if, as to the fleſh, they go into it as to an houſe of mourning, they may yet find it, by God's Bleſſing, as to the ſpirit, an houſe of feaſting.

MAY they remember by whoſe means under God it came to be ſo! and may they now take in good part one word of Exhortation, that they "*Study to be quiet.*" The poor receive good at the hands of God, with pleaſure certainly, with thankfullneſs I hope. Let them receive evil patiently; for no evil can come from That Hand but with moſt perfect reaſon, and with a tendency to their good in the end, if they make a Right uſe of it: But they will make a very Bad uſe of it, if they aſcribe the trying diſpenſations of Providence to their Brethren, who are in their proportions always involved in the ſame Calamities, as they partake likewiſe of the ſame Bleſſings with themſelves. It is God, not man, that giveth rain and fruitful ſeaſons; and it is God, not man that ſendeth the blight and the canker-worm.

I. Theſ. c. 4. v. 11.

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By ſtudying to be quiet they will beſt thank God for all his mercies, and they will beſt thank their Benefactors, who make themſelves God's inſtruments in the diſpenſation of thoſe mercies. But on the Contrary, they will become moſt inexcuſeable in the eyes of God and Man, if they give themſelves up to riot and drunkenneſs, to envy, and murmurings, and ſtrife, and every evil work.

Nor can they even hope for the Bleſſing of God upon this pious undertaking, for Their good, if they will not on Their part contribute, by a ſober and godly life, to the peace and proſperity of the Community.

Now to God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, be aſcribed, as is moſt due, all honour, power, majeſty and glory, henceforth for evermore.

F I N I S.

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